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JUDGES PLEAD GUILTY TO MURDER

By the Editor

If one single judge or magistrate in Britain were to plead guilty to murder, there would be an immense sensation. A few days ago, a total of 143 West German judges and public prosecutors tacitly admitted their complicity in thousands of brutal murders, but the news caused scarcely a ripple. The judges, instead of being brought to justice, retired on fat pensions.

The West German judges who went into "honourable retirement" on June 30th 1962 were all men who had helped to pass death sentences during the nazi era; not "normal" death sentences for capital crimes such as murder, but terrorist death sentences for hiding a Jewish child, for giving a cigarette to the British POW, or for taking some scraps of food from a bombed-out ruin. And the 143 judges who retired as a result of the polite urging of the West German authorities formed only a tiny proportion of the more than 5000 nazi judges who today hold posts at every level in the West German judicial system.

What is the background to this fantastic situation in which 143 judges, men who should be the most respected and most law abiding members of the community, confess to murder and then draw a pension from the government which appointed them to their posts?

A full explanation takes us back to the nazi era, in which the German judges played a sinister role. With a few honourable exceptions, the German judiciary played a despicable role under Hitler. The judges were probably more immediately guilty than any other section of the population, with the exception of the SS thugs who committed the mass murders, because they provided the "legal" basis for the death sentences passed on more than 50,000 anti-fascist resistance fighters in Germany and the occupied countries, and for others who had offended, often in minor ways, against the nazi state.

At the end of the war, in 1945, the main allied powers signed the Potsdam Agreement, which provided that war criminals should be brought to justice, and other influential nazi supporters should be removed from office. These clauses obviously applied to Hitler's hanging judges. In East Germany, the present GDR, these clauses were rigorously applied, but in West Germany, after an initial marking-time period, nothing was done to purge the judicial system.

The big break-through for Hitler's hangmen came in 1951, when the West German Parliament passed regulations explicitly guaranteeing the return to office of officials, including judges, who had been put out to grass during the early post-war denazification period. With only the most cursory examination of their past records, the nazi judges resumed their seats on the bench, and since then have been administering "justice" in West Germany. Today there are over 11,000 judges and public prosecutors in all branches of West German justice: more than half of them are veterans of the Hitler era.

In 1957, the Committee for German Unity in East Berlin began to investigate nazi court files held in the German Democratic Republic, and even these incomplete files soon disclosed that at least 1200 of the West German judges had held posts in Hitler's Special Courts and Military Courts, the courts which imposed the most drastic sentences. Uncounted others had given their aid and support to the nazis in the "normal" courts. (GERMAN REPORT gave full details of these revelations, starting on October 25th 1957.)

At first the West German Government attempted to brush off the revelations from the GDR as "Red Propaganda", but growing public indignation in western countries, expressed in many articles and in questions in the House of Commons, gradually forced the West German authorities to take the situation more seriously. None of the judicial murderers were brought to trial, but a few of the more obviously incriminated were prevailed upon to retire. The West German authorities tried to excuse their inaction by stating that judges could not be sacked for any reason: they were appointed for life under German law.

Finally, in 1961, the pressure of public opinion both abroad and in West Germany itself became so strong that something had to be done. On September 8th, the West German Parliament passed a special law stating: "A judge or public prosecutor who held a similar post between September 1st 1939 and May

9th 1945 can be retired on his own application. Application can be made up to June 30th 1962."

On the same day, the West German Parliament passed a resolution explaining what the law meant. This resolution stated: "Parliament expects that all judges and public prosecutors, who can expect accusations from the past because of their complicity in death sentences, will be aware of their obligation to retire, thus ensuring a clear division between the past and the present."

And as I said at the beginning of this article, 143 West German judges and prosecutors have just lodged pleas of "guilty" to charges of murder, and been permitted to retire on pensions ranging up to about £2000 annually.

Hundreds, and probably even thousands of others have rejected the chance to retire, confident that the re-nazified West German state will do nothing about their cases.

Public opinion in West Germany and abroad forced 143 nazi murderers to quit office. Public opinion can force the other nazi murderers, not only in the courts, but in the West German police, the Bundeswehr, and the Government, out of office. When this has been done, then West Germany will be able to make some claim to be a civilised country.

Prosecutor Pensioned, Bonn "Embarrassed"

The West German Government was forced to pension off its top prosecutor on July 11th, after revelations that he had been involved in passing death sentences during the nazi era.

The nazi lawyer, Wolfgang Fraenkel, had been appointed to the top post of West German Procurator General on March 30th this year. Full details of his crimes, and his Nazi Party membership were disclosed in GERMAN REPORT on July 6th. Fraenkel will now receive a pension of about £150 monthly.

When he was appointed to the post in March this year, West German newspapers lauded him as a "fine, open-minded liberal man, and a firm oponent of the death penalty."

After Fraenkel's dismissal, most West German newspapers expressed their shock at his appointment.

These newspapers generally exonerated Justice Minister Wolfgang Stammberger, who appointed Fraenkel, saying that he could have known nothing about Fraenkel's record; a few newspapers suggested he would have been wise to make an investigation before appointing Fraenkel.

No West German newspaper has yet drawn attention to the fact that Justice Minister Stammberger himself served the nazis as officer in the notorious "Penal Battalion 999". The soldiers in the battalion were largely conscripted anti-nazis, and the officers all specially selected nazi supporters. Anti-fascists forced to serve in "Battalion 999" state that Stammberger was noted for his brutality.

Here are some comments on the Fraenkel Case from the West German and West Berlin press and radio:

"We should not be so careless as we have been in making appointments to top posts. We must always keep in mind that nothing hurts our reputation in the world so much as the ease with which some people think they can overlook the shady past of some of our leading figures. But we must really try to remove one excuse which all other 'Fraenkels' have — the continual presence in office of Globke, the State Secretary in the Federal Chancellor's Office."

"Morgenpost", West Berlin, July 12th

"Today it seems like a bad joke when we learn that in his first years with the Federal Prósecutor's Office, Fraenkel was busy, of all things, with the prosecution of nazi crimes."

"Radio Free Berlin", West Berlin, July 11th

Embarrassment

"The impression left with observers here is that the main cause of the embarrassment over Fraenkel stemmed from the fact that the East Germans had uncovered him, not from what he had done under the Nazis."

"New York Times", July 13th

"The Fraenkel Case is one of the most embarrassing defeats ever suffered by the Federal Republic in the cold war. Since this is not the first case of its kind, the public has a right to know how this could have happened, who is responsible and what is being done to prevent its happening again."

"When it is stated that Fraenkel placed the Federal Republic in 'a very unpleasant situation', we can only add that he has discredited us in the worst possible way in the eyes of the world... Would it not be proper for the Federal Government to say some word which makes clear its opposition to the legalised terror methods of nazism? We are waiting for some such statement!"

"Rheinischer Merkur", West Germany, July 12th

"Faith in our justice has suffered a heavy blow — like so often in the past; for here it is not a question of one ambitious lawyer, but of German justice. There must have been people who knew exactly about Fraenkel's activities in the Reich Prosecutor's Office. Why did they remain silent? How could they permit such a man to become Federal Prosecutor, not to speak of the post of Procurator General? Were they forced to keep silent because their own consciences were not clear?"

"Frankfurter Rundschau", West Germany, July 12th

"Unfortunately there are facts which make any solution (of the 'nazis in office' question, ed.) very difficult and which constantly supply the enemies of the Federal Republic with new arguments. Leading among these is the State Secretary in the Federal Chancellor's Office, Hans Globke. The question as to whether Globke was personally guilty or, on the contrary, whether he used his influential position in the "Third Reich" to help victims of the nazis has been widely discussed and shall be left open here. But the fact alone that the commentator of the fateful 'Nuremberg Laws' is the closest adviser of the Federal Chancellor hurts the reputation of our state and would seem to hinder substantially the cleansing process made necessary by the Fraenkel Case. "The Chancellor has shown a laxity in this case which might seem proper in other questions but is certainly out of place in this connection. Globke himself puts his loyalty to his chief ahead of all other considerations. Is it not time to find a solution here which is humane and decent and which serves the common good? For Globke, like Fraenkel, is not simply a personal matter. In the one case as in the other the important thing is to set standards and to make clear to the public that the carry-overs from the 'Third Reich' can not simply be washed away by us and forgotten."

"Die Welt", West Germany, July 13th

SS SPY VISITS BRITAIN

By Julius Mader

The man whose picture is reproduced on this page is one of the most active agents of the West German military intelligence service, headed by former nazi General Reinhard Gehlen. The picture is an old one, for it comes from the nazi archives: it was taken at a time when the man, who usually travels today under the name of Stefan Sturm, was a nazi agent, and when the British authorities had offered a reward of £500 for his arrest.

Today, the reward appears to have lapsed, for this professional spy makes frequent "business" trips to Britain, generally in the guise of a "journalist".

His past history is confused, and difficult to reconstruct, but here are some details about his interesting career.

Franz Xaver Max Ferdinand Ernst Wimmer-Lamquet, for that is his real name, was born on April 28th 1919 in Vienna. After leaving school, he was recruited to serve as a nazi Fifth Columnist in Africa by the Reich Colonial Federation. Colonel Paul von Tschudi, head of the Reich Colonial Federation in Potsdam, wrote to the local Wehrmacht authorities on April 8th 1838: "I apply herewith for him to be released from Wehrmacht service, since in the interests of the Reich Colonial Federation we need such a young man for service as soon as possible in one of the old German colonies."

The Wehrmacht agreed to release Wimmer-Lamquet, and he was sent off to Tanganyika, (formerly German East Africa) where he went to work

as assistant to the nazi coffee planter Dr Wolfgang Klett, in Rawuya near Moshi. On the outbreak of war in 1939, the British colonial authorities in Tanganyika interned most of the Germans in the colony, including Wimmer-Lamquet. On March 3rd 1940 British Governor Mark Aitchison Young signed an order deporting Wimmer-Lamquet, and he returned to nazi Germany.

As soon as he got back to Germany, Wimmer-Lamquet applied for a commission in the SS. In his application he stated: "Since I am firmly convinced that the old German colonies will return sooner or later to German hands, I hope, with the aid of my knowledge of the land and the people, to become a German colonial official."

He was given the rank of Captain in the "security service" of the SS, and by some method which has not been disclosed, made his way in the middle of the war back to Tanganyika, with the aim of establishing a nazi Fifth Column group there. In Tanganyika and neighbouring territories, he and his group of SS agents committed a series of murders and arsonous attacks, and it was at this time that the British authorities placed a price of £500 on his head. In 1942, when it became clear that his Fifth Column group would be wiped out, he fled back to Berlin, where he was rewarded by promotion to the rank of Colonel in the SS.

In this rank he was attached to the Wehrmacht espionage group "Enemy Forces East", headed by nazi General Reinhard Gehlen. At the end of the war he was captured by the Soviet forces, and sentenced to 25 years imprisonment as a war criminal. In 1955 all nazi war criminals held in Soviet prisons were handed over to the German authorities. The West German authorities immediately recruited the old nazi agent into the Military Intelligence Service, headed by his old boss, General Gehlen. Since then, equipped with passport and press card in the name of Stefan Sturm, he has been active in West German interests, mainly in Britain and North Africa.

OLD NAZIS IN BRITAIN

The West German Embassy in London is largely staffed with former nazis, research in nazi archives has just disclosed. The fact that West German Ambassador Hasso von Etzdorf was a former active Nazi Party member and major of the brown-uniformed Storm Troops (SA) was revealed by GERMAN REPORT on September 1st 1961. Here are short notes on some of his assistants:

Dr Hans-Joachim Mangold, Head of the Economic Department of the London Embassy. Joined the Nazi Party on May 1st 1933, Membership No. 2,307,799. Served during the war as War Administration Assessor in the Nazi Military Administration in occupied Paris.

Dr Rudolf Thierfelder, Legation Counsellor in the London Embassy. During the Hitler period was judge in a nazi court.

Dr Ludwig Schulte-Strathaus, First Secretary of the London Embassy. Official of Ribbentrop's Foreign Ministry during the nazi period.

Dr Georg von Pirch, West German Consul in Edinburgh. Joined the Storm Troops (SA) in 1933, candidate member of the SS in 1934. Served in Ribbentrop's Foreign Ministry.

William Weiler, West German Consul in Liverpool. During the nazi period official in Ribbentrop's Foreign Ministry.

Listen to Berlin

Radio Berlin International, the Voice of the German Democratic Republic, can now be heard in English at 269 metres on the medium waveband every evening from 2100 to 2130 GMT (10 pm British Summer Time).

Shortwave programmes in English for western Europe can be heard at 1730, 1930 and 2100 GMT on 49.34, 49.06, and 41.10 metres.

Other English-language programmes include:

Africa

From 1615 to 1700 GMT on 24.98 metres.

North America

From 0100 to 0230 GMT on 31.38 metres.

Belgian & Czech Troops For West Berlin?

The British, French and American troops stationed in West Berlin might well be replaced by troop contingents from smaller countries in eastern and western Europe, Soviet Premier Khrushchov proposed in a speech to the World Congress for Peace in Moscow on July 10th.

The western troops had originally come to West Berlin in 1945 under the terms of international agreements to banish German militarism and fascism, Mr Khrushchov stated. The present occupation of West Berlin has long departed from this aim, and West Berlin today had become a NATO base, directed against the Soviet Union, Poland and Czechoslovakia.

The Soviet Union was in favour of converting West Berlin into an independent political unit, free to choose its own way of life and relying upon international guarantees. The Soviet Union had taken a number of steps towards this end, and declared that the occupation troops in West Berlin might be replaced by UNO troops, or troops from neutral states. Mr Khrushchov continued:

"Since no agreement has been reached on this point, we suggest that troops from Norway and Denmark, or perhaps from Belgium and Holland, should be stationed in West Berlin together with troops from Poland and Czechoslovakia. These troops would of course have to come under United Nations command, and not represent the existing military groups.

"But time is passing rapidly. If the western powers do not demonstrate their readiness to do away with the remnants of the Second World War, then the socialist countries, and other peace-loving countries, will have no other course than to conclude a peace treaty with the German Democratic Republic, with all that this entails."

Political commentators in Berlin pointed out that the new Soviet offer presented a further Soviet concession in an attempt to reach an agreed solution of the West Berlin problem. Immediately after Mr Khrushchov's new offer, government spokesmen in London and Washington stated that they regarded the Soviet concession as valueless.

Speaking on the German question in general, as distinct from the West Berlin problem, Mr Khrushchov stated:

"Everyone who wishes peace must be disturbed by the fact that West German militarism and revanchism are being pampered again by the US trusts. Chancellor Adenauer claims to be an opponent of the Hitler regime, but he bases himself on Hitler's old generals and officers, and pursues a policy which in its essentials is identical to that pursued by Hitler.

"During his period in office, Adenauer has devoted more money to West German armament than Hitler used during the preparations for the Second World War. Hitler's military expenditure between 1933 and 1939 amounted to 90 thousand million marks; between 1950 and 1961 Adenauer spent more than 100 thousand million marks on arms.

"The cannibalistic ideology of German militarism has not altered. West German War Minister Strauss is a violent opponent of all plans for disarmament. The Bonn militarists are stretching out their hands for nuclear arms, and the NATO Conference in Athens showed that they are on the point of getting them. In Bonn no secret is made of the fact that they wish to revise by force the results of the Second World War, including a revision of the German frontiers laid down in the Potsdam Agreement.

"The Soviet Union is in favour of writing 'finis' under the Second World War, and concluding a peace treaty with the two German states..."

Dresden Church Restored

An elaborate church ceremony in Dresden on July 8th marked the reconstruction and consecration of the main central nave and altar of the city's famous old Probstei Church. The ceremony was attended by Roman Catholic dignitaries from all parts of the GDR as well as several West German dioceses, and greetings were sent by Poland's Cardinal Wyszynski and the Pope. The church had been destroyed in the air raid which destroyed most of Dresden in February 1945.

The extremely difficult and expensive reconstruction job, whose costs were partly covered by government subsidies, is now completed except for the huge organ and some of the interior fittings.

West Germany's Crime Lead

West Germany has a big lead over the German Democratic Republic in crime figures, according to statistics published in Berlin at the beginning of July. Crimes of violence and crimes against property reported to the police are on an average four-and-one-half times as frequent in West Germany, these figures showed.

Previous GDR statistics showing a far greater crime incidence in West Germany have been discounted by western propagandists, who stated that the West German figures were inflated by motoring offences, which are more frequent in West Germany since there are more cars there. The latest breakdown of the figures, however, shows that "genuine" crimes lead the list. West Germany has, in proportion to its population, ten times as many cases of embezzlement and forgery; five times as many cases of robbery and blackmail; over four times as many cases of burglary; and three times as many sexual crimes such as rape. The only figure which may be inflated because of the high degree of West German motorisation is that of manslaughter, which is over twice as high in West Germany as it is in the German Democratic Republic.

Adenauer Election Losses

Chancellor Adenauer's crumbling coalition between his own Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Free Democratic Party suffered a severe loss of prestige when both parties lost votes and mandates in a provincial election on July 8th. The election, in West Germany's largest province of North Rhine-Westfalia, cost Adenauer's party the majority. CDU votes dropped to 46% (formerly 50.5%) and CDU seats in the provincial parliament dropped from 104 to 96 of a total 200. The Christian Democrats must now choose between a coalition with the Free Democrats, who have 14 seats (a drop of 1) or with the Social Democrats who have 90 seats (an increase of 9).

Political observers are watching their decision carefully, for Adenauer is reported to be considering a coalition with the Social Democrats on a national level, now that both parties are in almost complete agreement on nearly all issues.

West German Troops to Holland

An army unit of 3000 West German troops will soon be garrisoned permanently in the Dutch town of Budel, near the Belgian border, the Dutch Defence Ministry announced on July 8th.

Book Review

The Heirs of Heydrich

"Heydrich — Hitler's Most Evil Henchman". By Charles Wighton. Odhams Press Ltd, London 25 shillings.

Heydrich, Eichmann's boss, and perhaps the most unpleasant of all Hitler's evil crew, was executed by Czech patriots in 1942, just twenty years ago. He was a backroom boy, scarcely known during his life, and hitherto largely overlooked by the historians of the nazi epoch.

Now Mr Charles Wighton has pieced together the scanty details on Heydrich's life of crime and produced a fascinating volume. Many western authors dealing with the nazi period are content to base themselves on sources available in western countries, but Mr Wighton also took the trouble of consulting some of the valuable nazi documents held in the German Democratic Republic and in Czechoslovakia. And he has not been content to regard Heydrich as simply a hateful figure in a time long past: throughout the volume he points out that many of Heydrich's assistants are not only still alive, but back in key posts in the West German state.

Here are some extracts from the valuable introduction to the Heydrich volume:

Heydrich is dead, but his henchmen still live and flourish. Hundreds of the Gestapo, the Sicherheitsdienst, and the Einsatzgruppen thugs and murderers, who destroyed millions on Heydrich's orders, are once again in positions of authority in Western Germany. Many of them were professional policemen drawn from the cities and provinces of the Third Reich. Today they are still police officers distributed far and wide throughout the ostensibly re-educated police forces of the German Federal Republic.

How many of Heydrich's thugs now hold senior appointments in the West German police force is difficult to estimate... but until comparatively recently there were certainly several hundreds of Heydrich's henchmen in key posts — with at least 200 in the rich Ruhr province of North Rhine-Westphalia. All served in one or other of the murder-and-terror gangs which exterminated at least 1,000,000 Russians, Poles, Jews and others during Hitler's four years' campaign in the East. Their continued presence in German public service is an affront to democrats everywhere.

But to the survivors of Lidice, and the Czech people as a whole, the continuance in West German public life of two in particular of Heydrich's close associates is a special affront; they are:

1. Dr Bernhard Wehner. Head of the Murder Commission rushed to Prague after Heydrich's death, Wehner ruthlessly tracked down and eventually destroyed the two gallant Czech patriots who made the attack. ... While this book was being written he was still a police officer in Dusseldorf — despite the comment of a West German court that "his political burden" was such that it was doubtful whether he should enjoy the protection of the court.

2. Ex-Obergruppenfuehrer Heinz Reinefarth ... Reinefarth was sent to Prague just after Lidice as Chief of the Ordnungspolizei, and until early in 1943 he carried out the reprisals against the Czech Resistance. Reinefarth later gained international notoriety for the brutality and terror with which he suppressed the Warsaw rising in autumn 1944. For the past ten years he has been burgermeister of the pleasant North Sea holiday island of Sylt. For some years he has also been an M.P. in the Schleswig-Holstein Provincial Parliament where local officials successfully blocked attempts at legal action. In the late autumn of 1961, however, as the result of growing protests... the judicial authorities of the half-Nazi province of Schleswig-Holstein at last took steps to deprive Reinefarth of his parliamentary immunity as a prelude to legal action. The reason for this sudden reversal of policy was given as the discovery of "new evidence on Reinefarth's past in Nazi files". The files had been available to all — except apparently the Schleswig-Holstein authorities — for at least a decade.

Hundreds of other cases of Heydrich's henchmen holding key posts in the (West) German police, in public life and in big business during recent years and months could be cited. Their names in most cases mean little — except to the Czech, Russian, French, Dutch, Israeli, Polish and Norwegian survivors of the massacres they perpetrated.

But the most sensational case of Heydrich's murder-men in the West German police centres round the area of Recklinghausen in the north of the Ruhr. There, in the early summer of 1941 — as in other parts of the Third Reich — police officers and men from the towns of Recklinghausen, Bottrop and Bochum were formed into what was officially designated as Battalion 316, a section of the Special Service Groups which were to gain international notoriety as Heydrich's Einsatzgruppen.

Battalion 316 went to the East Front immediately Hitler attacked Russia. Three weeks later the Ruhr policemen celebrated their arrival in White Russia by slaughtering 6,000 Jews in the streets of Bialystok — and left the corpses where they fell...

Came 1945 and the British and American "re-education" of the West German police. Four years later, a West German Government was set up in Bonn. In due course the officers and men of Battalion 316 returned home — and resumed their police duties.

The facts of Battalion 316's activities were a matter of common record. ... The German authorities in Bonn, however, and particularly the Federal Ministry of the Interior — where the Minister Dr Gerhard Schroeder (Foreign Minister since November 1961) was somewhat inhibited owing to his own equivocal Nazi past — turned a blind eye.

The men of Murder Battalion 316 continued to serve faithfully, hunting petty criminals and chasing errant motorists on the Ruhr autobahn.

The West German TUC, however, and particularly the union representing the police, made repeated protests. Nothing happened — until a press conference held in Communist East Berlin in January 1961, where the whole story was revealed... That same evening an authoritative West German news source announced that the former commanding officer of Battalion 316 had been relieved of his post in the Bochum police. Soon afterwards another police officer who had been one of his principal deputies

"JUST AS GOOD"

"The German soldiers of today are just as good as they used to be".

Admiral Karl Adolf Zenker, Inspector General of the West German Navy, quoted in "Der Spiegel", Hamburg, June 27th

in Russia was also sent on leave. Later in 1961 both were reported to be living quietly on substantial pensions.

Other members of Battalion 316 at the same time were still serving in the Ruhr towns... A high official of the Personnel Department of North Rhine-Westphalia, infuriated at the attacks on the Ruhr police, hit back: "Why should only we be attacked? What about the Bundeskriminalamt (the Federal CID office in Wiesbaden) and the Sicherungsgruppe (Security group) in Bonn itself, where there are former top members of the SS who were involved in shootings and other crimes, and yet no one has complained?"...

Further north the local newspaper in the Volkswagen factory town of Wolfsburg made a naive revelation: "About half the senior officials of the Lower Saxony provincial police **are not** former members of the SS." The inference is obvious, and alarming.

For long the Bonn administration — with the equivocal figure of Dr Hans Globke, the man who wrote the commentary on Hitler's anti-Jewish legislation as Chancellor Adenauer's Permanent Secretary of State — ignored protests from inside and far beyond Western Germany. Eventually, however, the continuous campaign of protest... forced the Bonn authorities to act more circumspectly.

Concern began to become marked — about foreign reaction if not about the Nazis — when it was discovered that the British Secret Service, on high orders from Whitehall, had established that a prima facie case of murder or other serious crime could be brought against at least 70 ex-Nazi judges still serving in West German courts.

In the late spring of 1960... reluctantly and belatedly the (West) German authorities were spurred to action. Some of the more notorious criminals were arrested... A still larger number were prematurely retired on generous pensions paid by the German taxpayer.

Despite these tardy measures — more than a decade after the establishment of the West German Government — all too many of Heydrich's henchmen still hold high posts in the Bonn Republic.

Mr Wighton then quotes an article in "The Times" of London stating "the past history of some members of the legal profession should have disqualified them from holding their posts", and continues:

The comment about the Nazi judges can be applied with doubled emphasis to Heydrich's policemen still in the (West) German police force. That is certainly the view of the Czechs mourning the dead of Lidice after 20 years. It is shared by millions of other Slavs who know from the Nazi documents that these men had been selected to exterminate them under the barbarous Hitler-Heydrich **General Plan Ost.**

The very real fears of the Czechs and other Slavs have nothing to do with Communism. They have suffered from the Germans over the centuries — and they fear that once again they will be the victims of a new "Greater Germany" police. That is one of the most important single factors in the present East-West conflict.

The story of the life and deeds of their former master Reinhard Heydrich is a warning of what could happen again.

Some Reflections on Brecht (I)

By Yvonne Kapp

(Democratic Germany's great playwright and poet, the late Bertolt Brecht, was "discovered" by British and American critics a few years ago. Since then a spate of books and articles have tried to describe his work, but little of it has been of lasting worth, or understandable to the layman. GERMAN REPORT believes that the following article, reprinted from "Mainstream" Magazine, New York, is by far the best short popular introduction to Brecht's work. The concluding portion of the article will be published in our next issue.)

It is clearly impossible in a brief space to do justice to a very complex, prolific, major writer, or to his works, which include over forty plays, many hundreds of poems, a considerable body of theoretical writings, two novels and a collection of short stories. Nor, in a tentative approach of this kind, is it in the least necessary to provide biographical details or literary references. For, at this date, apart from the spate of articles on Brecht that has been poured out in recent years, there are several books about him in English. One is supremely well documented, giving accurate and full information about publications, collaborators, dates and places. Others are less valuable and factual about Brecht's work and, as regards his life and personality, appear to be based on a good deal of hearsay and the evidence of former acquaintances of Brecht now strenuously working their passage as ex-Communists in Federal Germany and points west.

Since these non-Marxist works are available to everyone, there can be no harm for once in having a look at Brecht as a Marxist writer and in doing so from the viewpoint that he is the only great literary artist Marxism has produced in our time. This view does not seem to require any qualification at all; for here is an artist who not only based an entire, and entirely new, aesthetic theory on Marxism, but one who consciously evolved a form of poetry, drama, narration, acting, production and a whole approach to the theatre and its function to express his Marxist interpretation of social phenomena and of the role of art as a lever; a power to be used in resistance to the force of deadweight apathy, reaction and inhumanity.

In the published material on Brecht in this country — and in others — there are frequent references to his "ambiguity," his self-contradictory theories and indeterminate attitudes. In the last analysis, these writers think, this makes him neutral. And, of course, they know why: he is a split personality, according to one critic, torn by such inner conflicts that his plays — which the split personality of this critic allows him to admire while detesting the man — give him away, so to speak, revealing unconscious truths that Brecht himself tried to repress.

"Being a convinced Marxist and supporter of the Communist line on the one hand and a major poet on the other, his political and artistic selves were constantly involved in a peculiarly tragi-comic conflict" — so runs the blurb to the Split Personality thesis, and one can only thank goodness for Psychology, always so obligingly at hand to peptonize the indigestible.

To approach Brecht from an avowed anti-Marxist standpoint is to make quite sure that one will not understand him; for, from the start

to finish, he was presenting human beings in the throes of the class struggle for their own contemplation. What interested him above all was the pressure — ethical, emotional, economic — that class-torn society exerts upon individuals and on their relations to each other and to society.

"The coherence of a character is shown, in fact," he wrote, "by the way in which its individual qualities conflict with one another."

Brecht is the dialectical artist par excellence. At a very early stage of his creative life, and when his mood was still an anarchistic one, he assimilated the meaning of dialectical materialism and applied his understanding in the most gifted and imaginative way we have yet seen.

Many of his ideas, indeed most of them — about production, acting, lighting and the many devices for what he called "ushering the audience into their own real world with faculties alert" — were evolved long before 1949 when, with the foundation of the Berliner Ensemble at the Theater am Schiffbauerdamm in East Berlin, he at last had the opportunity to produce his own and other people's plays as he wanted, and to set the stage — not, alas, in every case literally — for the production of great plays written during exile and war: Mother Courage, The Caucasian Chalk Circle, Puntila, Galileo, The Good Woman of Setzuan, Arturo Ui.

Brecht's conception of the epic (non-Aristotelian) narrative drama and his much published theory of Verfremdung (an invented word, frequently translated as "alienation," but nearer to the sense of "unfamiliarizing," "setting at a distance") were also long standing, and he himself coined the hideous word "dialecticizing" to express both the epic character of drama and this "setting at a distance," which he saw as one and the same thing.

He illustrated the precise difference between the effect of the Aristotelian and the epic drama by comparing audience reaction. In the one case the spectator says to himself:

"That's right. I've felt like that myself. That's just how I am. This is all perfectly natural. It'll always be like that. I'm appalled by this character's sufferings because there's no way out for him. This is great art: it's all self-evident. I weep with their weeping, I laugh with their laughter."

Watching the epic, he says:

"Fancy that. I wouldn't have thought it. People shouldn't do things of that sort. This is all very odd, almost incredible. It must be stopped. I'm appalled by this character's sufferings because, when all's said and done, there could be a way out for him. This is great art: there's nothing self-evident about it. I laugh over their weeping, I weep over their laughter."

And again, in illustration of the Verfremdung principle — the "V-Effect" — Brecht said:

"To see one's mother as a man's wife needs a V-Effect, which is produced, for example, if one acquires a stepfather. If one sees one's schoolmaster dunned by the bailiffs, a V-Effect occurs: one is jolted out of a relationship. . . ."

Important as these theories are, they can be justly assessed only by reading his own writings on the theatre, shortly to be published here in translation; and that is not a particularly easy way either, for Brecht himself constantly developed and progressed; his ideas grew more diversified, complex, were deepened and enriched with successive stages of experience and discovery. In his creative work he was continuously extending the frontiers of his aesthetic knowledge. It is not surprising therefore, that a lot of confused thinking, and even nonsense, about his ideas has always gone on, nor that, like Marx who exclaimed: "Thank God I'm no Marxist," and Tolstoy, who expressed his loathing of the Tolstoyans, Brecht should have said:

"A lot of my remarks about the theatre are wrongly understood. I realize this from the letters and articles that profess to agree with me. I feel rather like a mathematician who gets a letter saying: 'Dear Sir, I am entirely of your mind that two and two make five'."

But to turn from the theories to the plays themselves, there is one very interesting and significant thing about almost all of them which reflects both the double standard by which bourgeois society exists and the contradictions — the assaults on dignity — to which it gives rise as man, the individual, exploits, succumbs to or challenges the status quo. This theme recurs in play after play, in one aspect or another, in character after character, sometimes stated as a social one, often as both. And it is this theme that has led to the charge of "ambiguity", "neutrality", to the notion that Brecht cannot make up his mind about his own or his characters' attitudes, and to the even more mistaken idea that these plays are psychological dramas. They are not. They are dialectical, philosophical dramas, more readily understandable to Marxists perhaps, though, Marxist or not, one must be unresponsive not to feel their tremendous impact.

To give examples of this "duality": in *The Good Woman of Setzuan* one person plays two roles. The good-hearted prostitute Shen Teh, to whom the gods have kindly given enough money to open a shop, can only save herself from ruthless exploitation by assuming the character of the ruthless exploiter Shui Ta.

In *The Seven Deadly Sins*, an opera-ballet also called Anna-Anna, two people play one role. There is the Anna who treads the path of petty bourgeois virtue in order to make her fortune and has always to prevent the other Anna from straying into those vices which stem from the just and generous impulses of free and happy people — but not if they want to make their fortune.

In *Puntila* the reactionary and calculating landowner when sober becomes the genial friend of mankind when drunk.

Mother Courage, the camp-follower who trades on war, never understands to the end, and beyond it, that war is her destroyer, not her life-giver. Her son Eilif is put to death because he performs the same deed in peace, when it is a crime, as in war, when it is heroic. Both these characters are caught up helplessly in a machine whose workings they can neither comprehend nor control. But the onlookers can comprehend them — and could control them.

The *Caucasian Chalk Circle* is pivoted on two standards of justice and two standards of motherhood — the legalistic and the human — in a property-owning society.

Galileo is about two standards of intellectual integrity in a society whose ruling circles have reason to fear the spirit of scientific enquiry and the power to silence and exterminate the scientific thinker.

The *Exception and the Rule* is a wry thesis on the fact that it is positively unnatural for the servant not to murder the master when the unnatural exploitation of man is taken for granted.

In *Arturo Ui* the Nazis are seen to be gangsters but speak like heroes: their base and brutal maneuvers are clothed in classical language, and in this form Brecht simultaneously exposes the bestiality of the regime and how it could deceive and corrupt a whole nation.

This is but a single thread in the rich and complex fabric of Brecht's work, and of the plays cited; but it is always there, inextricably woven into the fundamental pattern of his thinking, and it is the Brechtian theme; a very important key to his work.

(To be concluded)

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

Like many journalists, I am a compulsive reader. Almost anything will do, ranging at a pinch down to the label of a sauce bottle (the label on Angostura Bitters is particularly to be recommended in this field, since it has about as much information on it as a small book).

As a result, I found myself last week reading the latest "Amtliches Handbuch des Deutschen Bundestages", the official Who's Who of West German parliamentarians. The biographies for this volume are supplied by the parliamentarians themselves, so they reflect what these ladies and gentlemen want the public to know about their past careers.

To savour the full flavour of these biographies, it is really necessary to perform the rather difficult operation of reading four volumes simultaneously: the handbooks for 1949, 1953, 1957 and 1961. If you can manage this, then you can see how changes in public taste have prevailed upon the MPs to doctor their own histories.

Good Taste

In 1949, for instance, it was still "good taste" in West Germany to have been an anti-nazi resistance fighter. The 1949 biography of Free Democrat Willi Max Rademacher, for instance, notes that he was "politically persecuted between 1933 and 1945". All subsequent handbooks omit this line, and in fact note no details of his career from 1922 to 1945.

Another Free Democrat, Dr Thomas Dehler, Vice-Chairman of the Bundestag, had second thoughts too. In 1949 he proudly noted: "From 1933 to 1942 member of an opposition group against Hitler, which was later associated with Dr Goerdeler. Arrested in 1938, and sent to forced labour in 1944". In subsequent editions of the book he has cut these lines.

Another man who seems to have become ashamed of his anti-nazi past is Jakob Altmaier. In every edition up to and including 1957 he told of his years in the anti-Hitler emigration, and how he represented a French Socialist paper during the Spanish civil war. In the 1961 edition, all reference to such youthful follies is deleted.

But at least these gentlemen just forgot about their real or imaginary resistance records, and did not try to turn them into the opposite. This was reserved to leading Social Democrat Wilhelm Mellies.

In 1949 Herr Mellies noted in his biography: "Removed from teaching post (in 1933) for political reasons." In all subsequent editions of the handbook this became: "Resigned in 1933 from teaching post at own request."

So far I have mentioned no Christian Democrats, but here is a note on Professor Eduard Wahl. In 1949 he claimed: "Forcibly incorporated into the Wehrmacht because politically incriminated." In later editions this entry changed into: "1944; war participant."

At the same time as some MPs began to suppress their anti-nazi past, others decided that it was foolish to be too frank about their pro-nazi activities. In the 1957 handbook, Ernst Lemmer, Minister of All-German Questions, published the sentence: "1933 to 1945, Berlin correspondent of foreign newspapers". Since this sentence appeared, GERMAN REPORT and other papers have reprinted some of the nazi articles from Lemmer's pen which appeared in foreign newspapers during the Hitler era, so in the 1961 edition of the handbook Dr Lemmer has deleted this line. According to his new biography he apparently hibernated during the nazi years.

Dr Hermann Conring, another Christian Democrat, also appears to have concluded that a little discretion is necessary. In 1957 he was still proudly proclaiming: "During the Second World War, Provincial Governor of Groningen, Holland". By 1961 this sentence had disappeared.

Yet another Christian Democrat with a slightly guilty conscience, at least as far as biographical notes are concerned, is Dr Walter Loehr. In 1953 and 1957 he was still happily proclaiming that he had been nazi General Commissioner for Special Questions of Chemical Production, a post which presumably entailed some responsibility for poison gas. In the 1961 handbook he has dropped any mention of his wartime activities.

Dr Guenter Frede, a Social Democratic MP, has not found it necessary to revise his autobiographical notes, since they offer a little comfort both to electors who like a man with an anti-nazi record, and electors who prefer a fine upstanding nazi officer. In both the 1957 and 1961 handbooks he notes: "Removed from office in 1933 for political reasons ... (in Second World War) Captain and Section Chief in Breslau District Military Command."

But apart from these various significant changes, there are a number of clues offered to readers who know how to read between the lines. Let us take the case of Walter Hammersen, newly-elected MP of the Free Democratic Party. He notes: "1939 provisional Landrat, 1941 Landrat in Hohensalza (Wartheland)." The entry looks harmless enough; but "Wartheland" was the area of Poland which was directly incorporated in Greater Germany by Hitler; hundreds of thousands of Polish inhabitants were driven from their homes and deported to the east under terrible conditions; and the men charged with doing this job were the local government officials such as Landrat Walter Hammersen.

I have just got space to deal with one further entry which looks moderately harmless on the surface. It is the biography of Free Democrat Albrecht Aschoff in the 1961 handbook, which notes: "In Second World War on almost all fronts, with final rank of Colonel and commander of a Panzer division. Held until October 1955 in Soviet POW camp."

It sounds relatively harmless; but the only German soldiers who were held by the Soviet Union until 1955 were men who had been sentenced to long terms of imprisonment for war crimes. They were returned to Germany in 1955 in a possibly mistaken Soviet bid to clear away the remnants of the Second World War. In the case of Herr Aschoff this gesture of clemency was certainly mistaken: he is now active in politics again as a member of the West German Parliament.

Lawson's Scoop

I always admire the indomitable way in which some reporters get their inside information. Take Mr Colin Lawson of the London "Daily Express", for instance. On July 11th he reported, gasping with excitement: "The West German Socialist Party, which has reliable links inside the Communist zone, says that in a top-level reshuffle, Stoph has been made 'First Premier'."

The "reliable link" who got this piece of secret dope was a really skillful operator. He had gone to an East Berlin newsstand on July 5th and paid 15 pfennigs for a copy of the main newspaper "Neues Deutschland", which reported prominently on its front page that Willi Stoph had been promoted to First Deputy Prime Minister of the GDR.

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